

First 5 Commission of San Diego

Subject: Policy for Innovative Grant Funds

Policy Number: CFC-010 Effective Date: August 4, 2003

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Purpose

To establish the policy of the First 5 Commission of San Diego (“Commission”) for the award of Innovative Grant Funds.

Background

The Commission funds programs and services for children ages zero to five and their families to ensure that every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn. The Commission’s mandate is set forth in Health and Safety Code sections 130100 *et seq.*, San Diego County Administrative Code, Article IIIP, sections 84.100 *et seq.*, and the Commission’s Strategic Plan.

The Commission’s funding decisions are guided by its Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan is a three-year plan that is reviewed annually. The Strategic Plan sets forth the Commission’s goals and general areas in which it will provide funding. The Strategic Plan is supported by an Implementation and Allocation Plan, which is also reviewed annually. The Implementation and Allocation Plan identifies on a yearly basis specific areas in which the Commission will fund programs and the amount of funds that will be committed to each area. The Implementation and Allocation Plan operationalizes the Strategic Plan by allocating funds received by the Commission and specifically identifies an established annual amount to award to the community in Innovative Grants. Innovative grants provide the opportunity to support innovative projects for children 0-5 and their families in our community.

Definition of Innovative Project. The intent of the Innovative Grant Funds is to encourage the development and application of new direct service approaches or techniques that assist the physical, social, emotional, and/or cognitive development of children ages 0 to 5 and their families. The opportunity to innovate can occur in several ways --- by testing a new method, replicating a best practice approach not yet offered in San Diego, and/or to targeting a unique population of children not yet addressed by other efforts. An innovative project can be a new component of an existing program, but cannot be a duplication or expansion of a project or service already offered in San Diego.

Policy

Projects receiving Commission Innovative Grant funds must be consistent with CFC Policy #009: *Supplantation*. All projects and services considered for Innovative Grant Funding by the Commission must comply with this policy.

Funding Allocation. On an annual basis the Commission will allocate Commission funds for Innovative Grants. Once the approved allocation has been expended, proposals for Innovative Grants will not be accepted until the following fiscal year, unless additional funds are identified and approved by the Commission.

Maximum Funding. Up to \$75,000 of Innovative Grant Funds may be awarded to a single entity in any fiscal year. No organization shall receive more than \$75,000 in any fiscal year. The grant period for Innovative Grants is one year.

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- ◆ An organization may request and receive Innovative Grant Funds for more than one project in the same fiscal year. The maximum allowable total award to one organization is \$75,000 in any fiscal year.
- ◆ An organization may request funding in subsequent years for different projects.
- ◆ Once a project receives Innovative Grant Funds, the project will be ineligible to receive any Innovative Grant Funds from the Commission for the same project in future years.

Procedures

Approval. Up to \$5,000 may be approved by the Executive Director in accordance with CFC Policy #008: *Executive Director Signatory Authority*, approved May 6, 2002. All requests over \$5,000 will require Commission approval.

Ineligible Applicants or Projects. The following applicants or projects are ineligible for an Innovative Grant award:

- ◆ Grantees who have received \$75,000 in Innovative Grant Funds in the current fiscal year;
- ◆ For profit organizations;
- ◆ Research or planning projects;
- ◆ Capital expenses, such as new facilities or building renovation;
- ◆ Single fixed assets valued over \$5,000.

Requirements for Funding. All organizations requesting Innovative Grant Funds must meet the following requirements to be considered for funding:

1. The organization must be a non-profit 501(c)(3), a public agency, or must have a fiscal agent that is a public entity or has a 501(c)(3) status that will assume all contractual requirements and liabilities.
 - An organization that does not have 501(c)(3) status may apply for up to \$5,000 but must identify a fiscal agent that is a public entity or a 501(c)(3) to receive the funding on the applicant's behalf.
2. The organization must adhere to the \$75,000 maximum funding parameters as described in the Policy section above.
3. The applicant's project must serve children prenatal to 5 years old (or a subset of this age group) and their families.
4. The applicant's project must support the vision, mission, values and operating guidelines of the Commission. (Attachment 1 provides a summary of these items.)

Application Evaluation Criteria. Each Innovative Grant application will be evaluated using the following criteria. Applicants are not required to meet all the criteria to be considered for funding.

1. How well the project supports the vision, mission, values and operating guidelines of the Commission.

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2. How well the project addresses one or more of the Commission's priority results. (Attachment 2 provides a listing of all approved Commission results.)
3. How well the project documents and addresses an unmet need or needs in the community.
4. How well the proposal demonstrates an innovative approach or technique that addresses an unmet need as cited in Item 3 above.
5. How much the project leverages additional resources or is able to provide matching funds.
 - o Leveraged or matched resources include other funding or inkind support such as equipment, supplies, or volunteer services provided by the organization.
6. How well the applicant demonstrates linkages with other community organizations that provide services to children and their families.
7. How well the applicant is able to document the positive impacts and results of their project.

Submittal and Review of Innovative Grants. All parties interested in applying for Innovative Grant funds may access this policy and the application via the First 5 San Diego Commission website, www.first5sandiego.org. If electronic means are not available, the applicant may contact the Commission office and a grant policy and grant application will be mailed to them.

Applications will be reviewed by an evaluation committee that may be comprised of Commission members, Commission staff and/or community experts. At a minimum, the evaluation of Innovative Grant applications will be conducted on a quarterly basis. To the extent possible, recommendations for awards above \$5,000 will be submitted for Commission approval on the month following the quarterly review. The Commission reserves the right to negotiate grant agreements with successful applicants.

Sunset Review: August 2005

Approved:

August 4, 2003
Date

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Commission Item No.

Attachment I

Summary of Strategic Plan 2003-06 Vision, Mission, Values, Operating Guidelines

The California Children and Families Act (Proposition 10) was passed by voters in November 1998. This statewide ballot initiative increased the tax on cigarettes and tobacco products. The revenue is being used to provide comprehensive, integrated systems to promote early childhood development from the prenatal period to age five. Health, child care and parent education programs are funded at the county level to best meet local needs as determined by each community. The intent is for all children to be healthy, to be cared for in strong and supportive environments, and to enter school ready to learn.

The First 5 Commission of San Diego oversees Prop 10 funds in San Diego County. Working closely with advisory committees and the community, the Commission adopts a Strategic Plan, selects priority results for improving the lives of children and families, and oversees the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including funding activities.

The Commission is advised by a 15-member Technical and Professional Advisory Committee (TPAC) of professionals representing many diverse segments of the local community, including parents, health care providers, child development specialists, researchers, community-based service providers, and educators. Their role is to inform the Commission about community needs, existing resources, research and best practices, and to advise the Commission concerning the Strategic Plan.

Leadership teams also support the work of the Commission with special community expertise concerning large and long-term initiatives. Currently there are four leadership teams, supporting civic engagement, literacy, school readiness and evaluation.

In 2002, the California Children and Families Commission adopted the name "First 5 California." The purpose for this change was to communicate that the State Commission is dedicated to improving the lives of California's children in their first five years of life. In October 2002, the San Diego Children and Families Commission adopted the new name "First 5 Commission of San Diego" to better reflect its focus.

In early 2000, the Commission produced its first *All 4 Kids* Strategic Plan, which addressed initial priorities and longer-term infrastructure development activities such as building partnerships and establishing evaluation, data and reporting systems. The first year of operations under this Strategic Plan included discussion, information gathering, priority setting, and funding activity. Lessons learned helped the Commission and the community clarify goals and methods for maximizing the opportunities offered by Proposition 10. The Commission's second Strategic Plan for 2001 to 2003 built on the accomplishments, infrastructure and wisdom developed under the first year's plan. As it worked to meet the goals of its second Strategic Plan, the Commission broadened its community engagement, improved funding processes, fostered collaboration among community agencies, developed an evaluation plan, and moved towards more focused, results-based planning.

This Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2003/4 to 2005/6 reflects the growth and progress achieved through three years of work, commitment, and shared experience aimed at improving the lives of children and families. The plan is the result of extensive dialogue among Commissioners, TPAC members, community members throughout the county, content experts, and public and private agencies.

VISION

Every child in San Diego County will enter school ready to learn.

MISSION

The First 5 Commission of San Diego provides proactive leadership to achieve this vision by:

- Funding services through grantmaking to achieve priority results
- Advocating for policy change at local, state and national levels
- Acting as a catalyst and leader for coordinating and integrating existing resources
- Building community capacity and infrastructure to support families

VALUES

As it makes decisions and determines directions, the Commission holds to these values:

- We are committed to the success of all of our children.
- We support the role of parents as the child's first teachers.
- We embrace the diversity of San Diego's communities.
- Our communities possess our greatest assets and their participation is essential to our success.
- The Commission and the community are mutually accountable to our children.
- Readiness to learn includes physical, mental, social, emotional, and developmental well-being.

Attachment 2

First 5 Commission of San Diego Approved Priority Results for 2003-06 Implementation Plan

CRITICAL HEALTH ISSUES THAT IMPACT SCHOOL READINESS ARE IDENTIFIED AND ADDRESSED.

- Support a countywide needs and assets assessment to identify priority health issues related to school readiness and develop research-based recommendations for strategic initiatives
- Continue to provide health and developmental assessments and treatment
- Increase the number of children receiving health and developmental assessments and treatment
- Support a health consultant program for child care providers
- Participate in and leverage resources through the State Commission's Oral Health Initiative
- Participate in and leverage resources through the State Commission's initiatives for children with disabilities and special needs
- Participate in and leverage resources through the State Commission's Infant, Preschool and Family Mental Health Initiative

PARENTS AND OTHER CAREGIVERS HAVE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT.

- Provide the Kit for New Parents to all new parents
- Provide ongoing education, information and support to parents to help them promote their child's cognitive development
- Educate and retain child care providers through the CARES Program
- Provide training and materials to child care providers and librarians to support early learning and pre-literacy.

PARENTS, COMMUNITIES AND SYSTEMS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S READINESS FOR SCHOOL.

- Implement School Readiness Initiative in eight school districts with low-performing schools
- Engage kindergarten teachers and other school professionals to identify commonly accepted expectations for school readiness
- Support the involvement of parents and community members in identifying issues and solutions through ongoing community engagement and parent leadership development
- Use the AmeriCorps/VISTA program to engage community members in community service that supports young children, families and communities
- Provide training and technical assistance to grantees and community organizations to improve the quality of services

COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES ARE LINKED AND COORDINATED.

- Support a pre-literacy planning collaborative to develop a long-term plan for San Diego County
- Support a regional behavioral health planning/coordinating effort to formulate a plan for linking and coordinating behavioral health services
- Support the development of the 211 information and referral program for families of children ages 0 to 5
- Develop and strengthen partnerships among private and public funders of programs for children and families